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# Security Council

Sixty-third year

*Provisional*

**5868**th meeting

Wednesday, 16 April 2008, 10 a.m.

New York

| | | |
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| *President*: | Mr. Mbeki | (South Africa) |
| *Members*: | Belgium | Mr. Chevalier |
| | Burkina Faso | Mr. Bassole |
| | China | Mr. Wang Yi |
| | Costa Rica | Mr. Urbina |
| | Croatia | Mr. Jurica |
| | France | Ms. Yade |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Wirajuda |
| | Italy | Mr. Prodi |
| | Libyan Arab Jamahiriya | Mr. Ettalhi |
| | Panama | Mr. Arias |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Brown |
| | United States of America | Mr. Khalilzad |
| | Viet Nam | Mr. Pham Binh Minh |

## Agenda

Peace and security in Africa

Letter dated 8 April 2008 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/229)

Report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186)

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa (S/2008/18)

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08-30672 (E)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Peace and security in Africa**

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**Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa (S/2008/18)**

**The President**: The Security Council has agreed in prior consultations to extend invitations, under rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure, to the representatives of Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Japan, Liberia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovenia, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, and, under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, to the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union and the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. Members of the Council have before them the following documents: a letter dated 8 April 2008 from South Africa transmitting a concept paper for this meeting (S/2008/229); a report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186), and the report of the Secretary-General on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa (S/2008/18).

I shall now make some opening remarks and a statement in my national capacity.

When we assumed the presidency of the Security Council last year, we initiated discussions on the need to examine the best possible ways of strengthening the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. We especially focused on the African Union, given that most of the United Nations peacekeeping operations are in Africa.

We have therefore convened this debate of the Security Council to discuss this matter once more and to give a further opportunity, especially to African countries, to share their experiences in regard to United Nations peacekeeping operations. Your high-level attendance of this meeting confirms our shared view of the timeliness of this engagement. We do hope that at the end of this debate we will be able to adopt concrete measures to strengthen the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular, the African Union.

The African Union has shown its commitment to resolving African conflicts. The operationalization of the African Union Peace and Security Council and the continental early warning systems, post-conflict reconstruction and development, the Panel of the Wise and the African Standby Force are clear indications of this commitment and the basic architecture for addressing peace and security issues on the continent.

However, the availability of the necessary and predictable resources remains the most important constraint that limits Africa's capacity to give effect to these commitments and help resolve its own conflicts.

The issue of the funding of regional peacekeeping operations is central to defining and streamlining the relationship between the United Nations and African Union. We therefore welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an African Union/United Nations panel of distinguished persons to consider in depth the modalities of financing and supporting in other ways the peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organizations.

After all, when the African Union addresses peace and security matters, it does so on behalf of the wider international community. Therefore, today's debate should give a clear indication as to the kind of mechanisms and processes that should be put in place to achieve this objective.

Similar attention has to be paid to establishing an effective partnership between the United Nations, especially the Security Council, and the African Union Peace and Security Council. In fact, the presence in this Chamber of the ambassadors of the African Union Peace and Security Council, who will have a joint meeting with their United Nations counterparts, is a significant step towards strengthening the relationship between the African Union and the United Nations.

At the same time, we need a comprehensive review of the experience of both the United Nations and the host countries with respect to United Nations peacekeeping missions. Clearly, this is necessary if we are to improve the effectiveness of these missions. The surge in peacekeeping operations over the years and the increasing role of regional organizations in both conflict resolution and managing post-conflict situations has necessitated such a dialogue.

The challenges of Africa are multidimensional and cannot be addressed in isolation, one from the other. Matters of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacekeeping are inextricably linked to the achievement of sustainable social and economic development.

Over the past decade, there has been discernible progress with respect to peace, security, democracy and development in Africa. To consolidate these achievements, it is critical that we make an additional effort, effectively and urgently, to address the conflict or post-conflict situations already on the shared agenda of the United Nations and the African Union.

Our peacemaking efforts on the African continent have shown us that the resolution of conflicts requires an approach that places the views and efforts of the affected country and its people at the centre of the search for a peaceful solution, thus obliging the international community to intervene as a partner in support of the national effort.

I sincerely hope that our deliberations will assist us to achieve the objectives of this debate.

I shall now resume my duties as President of the Council. I now give the floor to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, who will introduce the two reports before the Council.

**Mr. Pascoe**: As you know, the Secretary-General will be here to make a broader statement in a few minutes. At this point, I would only like to very briefly introduce two important, recent reports of the Secretary-General that go to the heart of the issues being discussed today at this high-level meeting on peace and security in Africa.

First, there is the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, particularly in Africa (S/2008/18), which reviews the recent efforts to develop more multifaceted approaches to dealing with conflicts, particularly in Africa. It emphasizes the need for a broad strategy that helps to build national and regional capacities for preventive action. Although conflict prevention is not always highly visible, it remains the most cost-effective and efficient way to promote international peace and security.

In order to enhance United Nations capacity for early warning, conflict prevention and mediation in Africa — and elsewhere — the Secretary-General has proposed the strengthening of the Department of Political Affairs to work in this area. Successfully preventing conflict in the field will require additional resources that can be provided only by Member States.

The Secretary-General's report makes a number of suggestions on how the Security Council can implement resolution 1625 (2005) and therefore improve and sustain the ability of the United Nations to avert negative developments and prevent crises from escalating into armed conflict. The Council is called upon, for example, to dispatch missions to the field on a timely basis to assess situations on the ground and to increase its use of the Arria Formula, or similar arrangements, for broad informal discussions. It is urged to use reports of groups of experts to carry out lessons-learned exercises to motivate parties to resolve conflicts. The Council is also called upon to develop a stronger and more structured relationship with the African Union Peace and Security Council.

The report calls for continued efforts to combat cross-border and transnational threats to stability, including efforts to control the arms trade. It urges continued efforts against gender-based violence. The report also calls for full cooperation in developing the capacities of African regional organizations to deploy both civil and military assets quickly when needed, including for developing an African standby force.

The Secretary-General has instructed the United Nations system to strengthen current levels of collaboration, to maintain efforts to deploy expertise

on prevention and to ensure that it continues to work closely with and support the African Peace and Security Architecture, including the Panel of the Wise. This will help build the long-term capacity of the African Union. It is thus in support of the Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union.

Secondly, there is the report of the Secretary-General on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/2008/186). The report describes the many facets of United Nations cooperation with regional organizations in peace and security activities under Chapter VIII. It identifies the challenges facing these partnerships, particularly in Africa, and focuses on the opportunities that could be seized to ensure more functional and effective cooperation and coordination. This would be based on a clear division of labour that would recognize the comparative advantage that each organization may have in dealing with a particular conflict.

The Secretary-General proposes better support arrangements for further cooperation with regional organizations. He recommends specific actions in the areas of conflict prevention, mediation, disarmament, non-proliferation, peacebuilding, human rights and humanitarian action. He suggests setting up a panel of distinguished persons from the United Nations and the African Union within the next three months to make concrete recommendations on how to help finance peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organizations.

I hope that this open debate will help forge a consensus on these vital questions, while reaffirming the centrality of early warning, conflict prevention and mediation among the main responsibilities of Member States and the Security Council.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Jakaya Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and current Chairperson of the African Union, to take the floor.

**President Kikwete**: At the beginning, Mr. President, you promised that we would have seven minutes to speak; now you have reduced the time limit to five.

Let me thank you, Mr. President, for considering the idea of holding this meeting to discuss the relations between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations. As rightly stated, African peace and security issues are on the current agenda of the United Nations Security Council. As members are aware, we in the African Union have developed a comprehensive, action-oriented peace architecture for addressing conflicts on our continent. Conflict prevention and mediation, post-conflict peacebuilding, counter-terrorism, humanitarian emergency response and the non-proliferation of nuclear and conventional weapons, particularly small arms and illicit weapons, are the major issues that preoccupy us in that regard.

In the African Union, our constitutive partnership with the United Nations has been underlined as essential for the effective implementation of our Union's peace and security agenda. It is for that reason that we in the African Union consider this meeting to be critical for the strengthening of our partnership.

Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations defines the basis for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. While the ultimate responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Security Council, regional organizations and peace initiatives serve as important building blocks for global collective security.

Today's meeting is a welcome endeavour in our joint quest to advance cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. Our experience in various conflict situations, during which we have worked together in Africa, has demonstrated that we have been able to achieve notable successes. But much more needs to be done, and there are challenges that need to be overcome through joint efforts. This meeting, therefore, is a perfect setting for identifying and discussing those challenges and agreeing on a way forward to overcome them.

Let me remind this important organ of the United Nations that Africa has come of age. We have become aware of our responsibility to take action with regard to conflicts on our continent and elsewhere on this planet. Indeed, through the African Union and the regional economic communities, African nations have increasingly been seen to be proactive in taking decisions and actions to deal with conflicts that befall African nations and peoples.

The AU and the regional economic communities need partnership with the United Nations for many reasons. First, they need to build their capacities to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. There is a serious demand for assistance in building the requisite institutional capacities. Substantial human and financial resources are required to enable us to carry out these critical functions, and such resources are not readily available. The United Nations can be of great help in assisting us; with such help, we can overcome these constraints. The Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union is an appropriate mechanism. The AU will continue to work with the regional consultative mechanism of the United Nations in Addis Ababa in implementing the Programme. But Africa's demand for resources is enormous. We appeal to the international community to do more.

There is also the question of speed in taking action when threats to peace arise, particularly on the African continent. Experience has shown that the United Nations is not as fast as one would like in taking decisions and action. We wish that the processes within this institution could be expedited. I am sure that I am not the first one to have said that; neither is this the first time that such an appeal has been made to the Security Council.

There are two other things that require the attention of those participating in this meeting. The first relates to mandates for regional organizations, especially where military intervention and sanctions are involved. The United Nations holds the overall mandate for those two types of action. We in the AU and the regional economic communities have intervened from time to time, and our intervention has proved effective. My concern is about the danger of conflict arising between the AU and the United Nations, especially if the latter were to take a different position where such decisions have been made and actions taken. I believe that this matter needs to be given serious thought and that ways to prevent such a thing from happening must be considered.

The second thing requiring our attention is an appeal that the United Nations establish mechanisms for helping the African Union and the regional economic communities to build the capacities to implement their decisions regarding conflict resolution as expeditiously as possible. As members know, conflict prevention and resolution require swift reactions. Indeed, the AU and the regional economic communities have demonstrated the capacity to be fast in many instances. Unfortunately, as I said earlier, we are constrained in terms of resources.

In some ways, this matter is very much related to the current funding regulations of the United Nations, which do not allow the funding of peacekeeping missions and operations led by other groups, even when authorized by the Security Council. That impedes peacekeeping and peace support missions undertaken by the African Union and the regional economic communities in Africa. That in turn affects the predictability and sustainability of such missions and may jeopardize entire peace initiatives undertaken by the AU and the regional economic communities in Africa.

In that regard, we welcome the proposal by the Secretary-General that an African Union-United Nations panel be set up within the next three months to consider the modalities of how to support regional organizations in terms of financing such operations. We hope that the panel will look at the possibility of amending regulations to enable the United Nations to finance regional operations authorized by the United Nations Security Council. But we also hope that modalities will be explored for assisting acceptable initiatives of regional organizations that do not have the authorization of the Security Council. After all, the goal is the same: the maintenance of international peace.

Experience has shown that such interventions have been very useful, at least in the case of Africa. Where regional, economic communities and our continental organization, formerly the Organization of African Unity and now the AU, have taken action — in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, southern Sudan, Somalia, Darfur, Zimbabwe and the Comoros — it has helped so much in mitigating the crises before the United Nations

arrived on the scene. Indeed, I believe that if in the future such mechanisms are strengthened and working relations with the United Nations are better defined and streamlined, there would be fewer instances where direct intervention of the United Nations as an institution would be involved.

Take as an example Zimbabwe, the subject of so much discussion these days. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), as an organization, has done a tremendous job. It is SADC's work that has enabled the people of Zimbabwe to hold the recent round of peaceful elections. SADC remains seized with the situation in Zimbabwe to ensure that the will of the people of Zimbabwe is respected. This is the spirit of the meeting last week, and it will be the spirit of future meetings to be held soon. SADC needs to be supported in this regard.

Before I conclude, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his tireless efforts in mobilizing additional resources and logistical support for the international community in support of African peacekeeping missions in places like Darfur and Somalia. I also thank the countries and organizations, such as the European Union, that have responded positively. But much more needs to be done, urgently.

The peacekeeping operations in Darfur and Somalia, both of which are authorized by the Security Council, are still seriously constrained owing to a lack of adequate financial resources, logistics and equipment. Within the broader issue of cooperation between the United Nations and the AU, I reaffirm and urge continuing implementation of the declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation, agreed upon by our two organizations in 2006.

In conclusion, let me once again thank you, Mr. President, for giving the AU an opportunity to share its thoughts during this important debate. We need and encourage cooperation between our two organizations, and our two Councils need each other. We in the African Union support the idea that these meetings should be held annually with as much technical consultation as may be required to be conducted in between. We look forward with great anticipation to the outcomes of this debate today and tomorrow. As usual, we expect the resolutions and decisions to advance and consolidate the working relations between the United Nations and the AU, and between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

**The President**: I welcome the Secretary-General and invite him to take the floor.

**The Secretary-General**: It is a great honour for me to participate in this very important high-level meeting of the Security Council.

First of all, I apologize for being late because of my unavoidable meeting with the Head of State of the Republic of Korea, my home country. I hope the Council will understand the situation.

It is an honour to join this Council and to welcome members to the United Nations. Allow me to pay tribute to South Africa for convening this debate on peace and security in Africa, and for giving us the opportunity to discuss the important relationship between the United Nations and the African Union (AU).

President Mbeki, I am especially happy to welcome you to the United Nations. Let me commend your personal engagement in strengthening our partnership.

Let me also congratulate President Kikwete of Tanzania on assuming the chairmanship of the African Union. I look forward to working with you, Sir, in the months ahead.

In the 15 months that I have served as Secretary-General, I have devoted more time to African issues than to those on any other continent — from peace and security to the Millennium Development Goals. I have visited 11 African countries thus far, and I will leave on Friday this week to visit four more.

Preventing and resolving conflict peacefully must remain high on the shared agenda of the AU and the United Nations. In this context, I welcome the announcement of a new Government in Kenya. Now that the immediate power-sharing issues have been addressed, I urge all sides to stay committed to resolving the longer-term causes of the recent unrest.

I am deeply concerned at the uncertainty created by the prolonged non-release of the election results in Zimbabwe. Absent a transparent solution to this impasse, the situation could deteriorate further, with serious implications for the people of Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean authorities and the countries of the region have insisted that these matters are for the region to

resolve, and the international community continues to watch and wait for decisive action. The credibility of the democratic process in Africa could be at stake here. If there is a second round of elections, they must be conducted in a fair and transparent manner, with international observers. I urge the leaders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to continue their efforts. The United Nations stands ready to provide assistance in this regard.

Meanwhile, we must step up the work for desperately needed progress in bringing peace and stability to Darfur and Somalia. The partnership between the AU and the United Nations will remain crucial to these efforts.

The Council has heard Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Lynn Pascoe introduce my two reports. As these show, the relationship between the United Nations and the AU is strong and broad.

The declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation, signed in 2006 between Chairperson Konaré and my predecessor, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, provides a vehicle for the United Nations to assist in building the capacity of the African Union. We have already made significant progress in giving life to the vision behind the declaration.

As provided for in the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme, we are taking concrete steps to help develop the African Peace and Security Architecture. This work covers a broad range of activities, from good offices and mediation on border issues, to early warning, conflict prevention and building operational capacity.

We have established a dedicated team to help operationalize the concept of an African standby force, which would build on the valiant and pioneering efforts of the African Union's missions in Burundi, Somalia and the Sudan. Today, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations team develops training, operational capacity and technical advice, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the subregional organizations and donors.

Our two Organizations are now far better equipped for the critical task of mediation, thanks to the establishment of the secretariat of the AU Panel of the Wise, and the launch of the United Nations mediation standby team of experts. Our cooperation during the crisis in Kenya is an example of how we can achieve more by working together.

Overall, we should be proud of the progress we have made. But, above all, we should be energized to do even more as we move ahead.

I am heartened at the deepening cooperation between this Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. I warmly welcome tomorrow's joint meeting of the two Councils — the second of its kind, and the first to be held at United Nations Headquarters.

This debate also gives me an opportunity to pay tribute to the outgoing Chairperson of the African Union Commission, His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré. Chairman Konaré, under your leadership, the AU has transformed its relationship with the rest of the world. I look forward to working closely with your successor, Mr. Jean Ping.

As we consolidate the partnership between our institutions, I will spare no effort in making it complementary, effective and inclusive. In the two reports (S/2008/18, S/2008/186) that the Council will examine today, I have made a number of specific proposals for its consideration. I am resolved to enhance cooperation with all regional organizations, so as to create in the future effective mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution, as well as a predictable, interlinked and reliable system for global peacekeeping under the Charter. I am confident that the Council's meeting today will contribute to that goal.

**The President**: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement. I am quite certain that all of us understand why he had to delay his joining us here this morning in the Council. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary-General.

I now invite The Right Honourable Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to take the floor.

**Mr. Brown** (United Kingdom): I want to start by thanking President Mbeki for convening this event and for his important and pivotal role in the creation of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, both of which are essential to ensuring African solutions to the challenges that Africa faces.

Six decades ago, the United Nations declared its ambition to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and recognized that peace and prosperity are indivisible. Today's discussion is an opportunity to forge a new consensus on the support that is now needed to prevent conflict, to resolve conflict and to rebuild from conflict afterwards. Work by the African Union, which I applaud, has laid the foundations for a political solution in Kenya in recent weeks, and it has helped create the conditions for recovery in Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other areas of the continent. But we recognize that the African Union needs more support, which, as President Mbeki has said, must be part of a wider endeavour.

Today there is still a gaping hole in our ability to address the illegitimate threats and use of force against innocent people. It is to our shame that the international community did not act in Rwanda. Darfur shows the urgent needs that yet have to be met. Today there are 28,000 African peacekeepers. But if we are to honour our responsibility to protect behind borders where there are atrocities, we need to ensure more systematic support for peacekeepers, and we need to build the capacity of vulnerable nations to prevent conflict. Therefore, in addition to training 12,000 African peacekeepers, Britain will step up its contribution to the joint European Union-African Union training exercises in support of the African Union's Peace and Security Directorate. But I believe we also need agreement on more predictable and sustainable sources of funding, as has already been mentioned around this table.

I welcome the Secretary-General's proposals for a senior panel, which should, among other things, examine the creation of an international trust fund with United Nations oversight.

History tells us that fragile and conflict States need not only humanitarian aid and peacekeeping, they need to combine that with help for stabilization and reconstruction. For countries where breakdown has occurred, it is now right to agree major changes in the way the international order responds, so that we can systematically combine humanitarian aid and peacekeeping with help for reconstruction and development.

Therefore, during our presidency of the Security Council next month in May, Britain will propose that when Security Council resolutions authorize peacekeeping missions, the whole United Nations system also is able to authorize action on stabilization and reconstruction. A single envoy is given authority for coordinating international efforts on peacekeeping and recovery in post-conflict zones, and a United Nations fund is created to provide immediate support for reconstruction, to which Britain will contribute. In the same way that we have military forces ready to respond to conflicts, we should agree to have civilian experts ready on standby to deploy quickly to help rebuild countries emerging from instability. For that purpose, Britain will lead the way by making available a thousand-strong United Kingdom standby civilian force including police, emergency services, professionals, judges and trainers.

I have alluded to the work done in Kenya, Darfur, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other parts of Africa. Three weeks ago, the people of Zimbabwe sent a strong message of their commitment to democracy. In line with President Kikwete's comments today, Britain supports those in the African Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) who are working to ensure that the will of the Zimbabwean people is upheld. We will do everything to encourage those efforts. I am pleased that SADC is to meet again this weekend.

We should also respond to the Secretary-General's suggestion that the United Nations can do a great deal to help in support of the African Union and SADC. I welcome the Secretary-General's statement today. Having seen the results at polling stations, no one thinks that President Mugabe has won this election. A stolen election would not be a democratic election at all. As the Secretary-General has said, the credibility of the democratic process depends on there being a legitimate Government. Therefore, let a single clear message go out from here in New York that we are and will be vigilant for democratic rights, that we stand solidly behind democracy and human rights for Zimbabwe and that we stand ready to support Zimbabweans in building a better future.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Romano Prodi, Prime Minister of Italy, to take the floor.

**Mr. Prodi** (Italy) (*spoke in Italian; English text provided by the delegation*): I wish to begin by thanking President Mbeki for this initiative.

Strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union (AU), is a critical issue that I care about deeply. This initiative therefore has our full support.

We have already travelled a long way down the road of cooperation between international and regional organizations. There are positive examples throughout the world. In Europe, the United Nations, the European Union (EU) and NATO have played, and continue to play, a vital role in stabilizing the Balkans. In the Mediterranean, we have a successful joint United Nations-EU mission in Lebanon. In Africa there are numerous partnerships between the United Nations and the African Union, such as in Darfur. In Asia, the comprehensive approach to Afghanistan is grounded in the need for complementarity between the United Nations and other regional organizations.

We have all come to agree on one basic principle, namely, that the closer the cooperation between the international and the regional levels, the more effective the actions of the international community in crisis situations.

I would now like to consider the African Union, which is the most interesting political reality of the African continent. As I said last year in my addresses to the Addis Ababa Summit in January and to the Security Council meeting on Africa in September, we have to keep working and to step up our efforts. As I see it, the African Union can make ever-greater progress if its follows the best practices of comparable political and institutional realities. I should like now to refer to a few working points.

I believe that the African Union, with the assistance of all of us, should continue down the path on which it has embarked to create permanent structures that will enable it to manage crises in political, military and civil terms. I repeat, in political, military and civil terms.

Of course, there is a problem of resources not unlike the one we face in Europe, where we have increased the European Union budget for civilian missions, strengthened our missions' command capacity and set up a mobilization and rapid reaction system for crisis situations. More is still needed, but 10 years ago that would all have been unthinkable. That represents important progress which deserves to be studied carefully by Africa.

Simply averring the will to handle one's own continental crises is not enough. The African Union has to follow through on that will resolutely. That is the only way for asserted ownership to become actual ownership. A continent that rightly aspires to play a global role should aspire to equip itself with the instruments needed to set its house in order. I am greatly encouraged by what I see — an Africa that is not just seeking assistance, but is, rather, playing a front-line role in international efforts to bring peace to the continent.

We see this also in the great efforts, which we fully support, of all the African subregional organizations. Together with the African Union, they have helped to identify a political solution in Kenya and are working to find a rapid solution to the profound crisis in Zimbabwe, which we are following with great concern and which I hope will be resolved as soon as possible, because that country needs a working democracy.

In building a more solid African institutional framework, the structures for coordinating all the regional organizations must also be strengthened. The European Union and the African Union launched a joint strategy in Lisbon last December. It was a historic outcome in which I believe, and I worked on it both in Brussels and in Rome. Now we must make it operational and concrete because it is a new and essential instrument.

I fully endorse the statement that the Slovenian presidency will deliver shortly on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to offer a few closing remarks about what Italy can do to continue lending a hand.

When I was the President of the European Commission, it was my responsibility to launch the European Peace Facility for Africa. As Italy's Prime Minister, I decided last year to introduce an Italian instrument to support the African Union and its peacekeeping efforts, particularly in the Horn of Africa. I signed the agreement with the President of the Commission, Mr. Konaré, which promotes African ownership in full complementarity with its European counterpart facility. The Facility has already enabled the achievement of significant results, such as in Somalia, where we are using it to train the Somali security forces and to rebuild the public administration.

The United Nations centres in Italy — such as the Staff College in Turin and the Logistics Base in Brindisi — will remain available to Africa as tools for education, training and capacity-building, in the spirit of the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in his report.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our readiness to strengthen cooperation — in ways to be jointly identified — between the United Nations and the African Union, including in the area of financing. I am fully aware that this is a key point to which African leaders attach great importance, as we have heard in earlier statements. The Secretary-General's report makes a number of proposals that we endorse. We will not fail to offer our ideas and resources in the pursuit of that process.

**The President**: I call on His Excellency Mr. Laurent Gbagbo, President of Côte d'Ivoire.

**President Gbagbo** (*spoke in French*): Like previous speakers, I should like to thank President Thabo Mbeki for this initiative, as well as Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who, immediately upon assuming his official functions, began to take the steps necessary to assist Côte d'Ivoire to emerge from its crisis.

I also commend President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, who helped us in his capacity as head of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). I wish to point out here that on Monday, before I boarded the plane, Côte d'Ivoire, having assembled all the actors to participate in the elections, set the date of 30 November for the first round of presidential balloting. It represents a victory for us all, and especially for Côte d'Ivoire, which has grown weary of this erratic crisis. The first round of presidential elections will be held on 30 November, and everyone should support us morally and assist us to convene the elections and to put an era that does us no honour behind us.

Today's meeting is an important one. I wish to make just a few points. The United Nations was established at the end of the Second World War. It is the same age as me and older than many current heads of State. It was created to resolve conflicts among States, but our conflicts in Africa generally take place within a State and are aimed at destroying it. That has been the case in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and wherever conflict has erupted. Darfur is a somewhat unique case because it contains both an internal Sudanese conflict and a border conflict between the Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic. It is perhaps the only case in which two or three States have faced off against one another in Africa. The others, even that in Kenya, are domestic conflicts, which were not exactly foreseen or contemplated as a reason for the establishment of the United Nations.

I greatly admire the initiatives that Africans themselves have launched. We have done a great deal in ending our own conflicts. I commend all those who have led the African Union and the Organization of African Unity before it, as well as our colleague and brother President Konaré, who is present among us, and his successor, who is striving methodically.

We need, however, to institutionalize all our progress, and the United Nations must support us. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, we have a Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Abidjan, but his work needs to reach out to our institutions and the United Nations must work to decentralize power. This is a question not merely of resources, but of responsibility as well. It is a structural issue. The African Union and subregional organizations, such as the Southern African Development Community, ECOWAS and the Arab organizations, must be provided with the structural responsibility to resolve the new types of conflict we are seeing today.

That is what I wanted to suggest. Of course it is necessary to support the African Union and its membership. My expectation from the United Nations is that such reforms will take place. Reform of the United Nations does not mean only reform in terms of who is on the Security Council and who is not: it is a question of who does what in the world. The world has become too big: I believe that the world population was not even 2 billion when the United Nations was founded, and there were far fewer independent States. With every passing month and year, new countries have emerged. We must ensure that regional organizations play a larger role, and that they enjoy the support of the United Nations.

That is my proposal, and that is why I came here today. Whenever Côte d'Ivoire has made significant progress, Africans have been on the front line. In 2005 we made significant progress through South Africa's

mediation; and we are making significant progress today through Burkina Faso's facilitation. We have established an inter-Ivorian dialogue with Burkina Faso facilitation. I believe that Africans have a great deal to offer Africa in terms of peace. They have a great deal to offer, and I want them to give a great deal — and to give more. I want the United Nations to support them so that they can give even more to peace in Africa.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi, Special Envoy of the President of China, to take the floor.

**Mr. Wang Yi** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to congratulate South Africa on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month.

The Charter of the United Nations assigns primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security to the Security Council. In Chapter VIII of the Charter, the founding Members of the United Nations, with great vision, also encouraged the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements. World peace and development are now faced with many difficulties and challenges, and it is imperative to respond to them forcefully and collectively at the national, regional and international levels. In a rapidly changing world, strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will both promote multilateralism and boost the international collective security mechanism.

Without stability and development in Africa, global peace and prosperity are out of the question. The African Union is Africa's largest and most representative regional organization, and it has gained widespread international recognition for the increasingly important role it plays in maintaining peace and stability and resolving conflicts in Africa. The good cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union over the past few years has become a model for observing the United Nations Charter. China salutes the determination, courage and dedication of African countries and of the African Union.

The twenty-first century should witness the end of disturbances and poverty in Africa. It should be a century in which Africa fully controls its own destiny and attains peace, stability and development. Achieving that goal requires a common effort by the international community and Africa and a closer partnership between the United Nations and the African Union.

China supports the forging of a stable partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. The Security Council bears a responsibility it cannot shirk regarding the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, while the African Union has a deep grasp of African issues. The two should strengthen their coordination and form synergies on the basis of equality, mutual respect, complementarity and mutual benefit, drawing on each other's strengths. In our view, the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union should be based on a predictable, sustainable and flexible framework. While maintaining its authority, the Security Council should give priority to supporting the key role of the African Union in resolving regional conflicts and should give full consideration to the views of the African Union.

We hope that the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur will complete its deployment at an early date and will begin operations. We also support the United Nations taking over the African Union peacekeeping operation in Somalia.

China holds the view that the United Nations should engage in multifaceted cooperation with the African Union in wide-ranging areas. Such cooperation should encompass the three pillars of security, development and human rights. It should be pursued throughout the process of confidence-building, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustainable development. Promoting a culture of reconciliation and attaining the Millennium Development Goals will not only help eradicate the root causes of conflict, but also provide a solid basis for ensuring peace in Africa. We support the United Nations and its Security Council, Peacebuilding Commission, Secretariat and other organs in building and strengthening coordination and consultation mechanisms with the African Union at various levels.

China calls for high priority to be given to capacity-building in pursuing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union. The African Union's efforts to make peace are constrained by a lack of human resources, material supplies and funding. The United Nations and the international community should respond positively to the African Union's legitimate requests and should work creatively to deliver on their promises and translate their pledges into action. We

hope that the United Nations will strengthen its cooperation with the African Union in personnel training, institution-building, the sharing of information and experience, resource management and logistical assistance; these are fields in which the United Nations has rich experience.

The Declaration on Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union (A/61/630, annex) should be fully implemented, and the United Nations should play a key role in pooling other international assistance.

Finally, I wish to thank South Africa for preparing a draft Security Council resolution on the issue we are discussing today. China fully supports the draft resolution.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Hassan Wirajuda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, to take the floor.

**Mr. Wirajuda** (Indonesia): Allow me at the outset to express my appreciation to you, President Thabo Mbeki, for your initiative to convene this thematic debate on an issue of tremendous importance to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Before I proceed, I wish to reiterate Indonesia's long-standing and irrevocable commitment to Africa. The then-newly-independent Indonesia, though still in its infancy, had little hesitation in promoting the cause of Africa's independence struggle through the seminal Africa-Asia Conference held at Bandung in 1955. Since then we have contributed actively to United Nations peacekeeping operations on the continent: in the Congo in the 1960s, and then in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the Sudan.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as in conflict prevention, is long-standing and is recognized in the Charter. It is a subject that has been gaining momentum and relevance, and rightly so: our increasingly complex and interconnected world, marked by a proliferation of actors and variables, requires us to look at issues in an ever more holistic and integrated manner. We simply do not have the luxury of remaining insulated or indifferent, as the destinies of all are intertwined and as conflicts in one region of the globe will sooner or later affect other regions.

Indonesia is an avid supporter of regional cooperation. We are convinced of the transformational potential of regional cooperation in preventing and settling conflict and bringing regional peace and stability in its place. Such conditions are prerequisites for economic development. Our own region's experience attests to that fact. Ensuring peace and security in South-East Asia for more than four decades, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has contributed immensely in shouldering burdens that would otherwise have fallen on the United Nations.

Indonesia is also a strong advocate for cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Of course, such cooperation is invaluable in strengthening and empowering regional organizations. It is not, however, a one-way process. Indonesia believes that the United Nations also benefits from such cooperation. After all, it would seem only natural that in dealing with particular conflict situations the United Nations should benefit from regional knowledge, perspectives and experiences. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Synergy and partnership should be promoted.

Most recently the United Nations and the African Union (AU), as well as subregional organizations in Africa, have shown us that such cooperation can deliver tangible results. Challenges certainly remain. More support is obviously needed to enable the AU to respond to and deal more effectively with conflicts on the continent on behalf of the international community. The United Nations and the African Union must therefore enhance their capacity for confidence-building, friendly diplomacy and peacemaking and realize their full potential. The need for such an undertaking is self evident, for it is the undeniable reality of our time that conflict situations in Africa constitute significant portions of the Security Council's agenda. The reward for such an undertaking is therefore greater still.

Collaboration between the AU and the United Nations has the potential to transform conflict situations, bringing peace, stability and prosperity to the continent. We commend the AU for taking the lead in Somalia through the deployment of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), thus contributing to peace and security in that country. We

call for more support for AMISOM by the international community. We also commend the AU for contributing to peace efforts in the Darfur region of the Sudan, where, with the consent of the parties, it deployed the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS). The transformation of AMIS into a hybrid operation provides us with important lessons that help us to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the AU and are also valuable for other regional organizations. We have also drawn on the experience of the AU and the United Nations in conflict prevention and peacemaking to supplement our own experience in those fields.

Consistent with the statement of the President of the Security Council last November (*S/PRST/2007/42*), under Indonesia's presidency, we recognize that regional organizations need to strengthen and increase cooperation among themselves. In that regard the United Nations can provide its political support and technical expertise. Indeed, with you presiding over the Council today, Mr. President, I am particularly pleased to highlight the close cooperation that Indonesia and South Africa have forged in promoting interregional cooperation. I am referring to our joint efforts in promoting Asia-Africa strategic partnerships launched at Bandung in 2005 during the 50-year commemoration of the historic 1955 Asia-Africa Bandung Conference.

I would like to highlight in particular the Asian-African Subregional Organizations Conference (AASROC) meetings in Durban and Bandung, which preceded the second Asia-Africa Summit in 2005. AASROC is significant in its approach of promoting cooperation among regional and subregional organizations in Asia and Africa. Cooperation between regional organizations or arrangements is an essential feature of contemporary international architecture.

Indonesia has benefited from interregional collaboration. The European Union and ASEAN have contributed significantly to our successful efforts to restore peace and security in the province of Aceh during the period from 2005 to 2007, especially by participating in a joint monitoring mission to supervise the implementation of the Aceh peace agreement.

With regard to the current hub-and-spokes relationship between the United Nations and the regional organizations, we are in favour of its expansion into a one consisting of a hub and a network of spokes, a network of regional organizations working together to maintain peace and security, connected to each other and with the United Nations at the centre.

With regard to my own region of South-East Asia and its regional organizations, since the Security Council thematic debate last November (*5776th meeting*), the ten members of ASEAN have moved forward by signing the ASEAN Charter. The Charter represents not only our shared values and shared visions but also our commitment to progress in unison and to contribute to international peace and security. That is our contribution as the ASEAN community.

Our region can learn from the experiences and best practices of other regions, including Africa. However, to us the notion of receiving is tantamount to the notion of giving — to provide, to confer. In a world of plenty, giving is a feature to be embraced by all. Indonesia believes that ASEAN can also offer its experiences and best practices to other regions. To strengthen our outward-looking strategy we have cultivated dialogue-partner relationships with some ten countries and organizations. ASEAN's reach extends far beyond its immediate subregion. Above all, we are strengthening our links with the United Nations. We signed a memorandum of understanding on United Nations-ASEAN cooperation last September.

Our participation reflects not only our wish to share our views and experiences on the issues but also our desire to learn the views, lessons and best practices of other countries and other regions, which we can take home to our region. We also hope our experience can be useful to other regions in the interest of a more peaceful world for all.

**The President**: I now invite the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, His Excellency Mr. Joseph Kabila, to take the floor.

**President Kabila** (*spoke in French*): May I begin, Mr. President, by stating my warm congratulations to you and my wishes for a fruitful mandate for the Republic of South Africa's presidency of the Security Council during the month of April. May I also say how much my country appreciates your initiative in organizing this special Council meeting devoted to relations between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU), on the subject of peacekeeping and international security.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and all his team, those at Headquarters and those on mission throughout the world, for their laudable and tireless efforts to promote and defend the objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter.

My country is currently in a phase of peacebuilding, renewal and reconstruction. I myself am Chairman-in-Office of the Economic Community of Central African States, and I warmly welcome the invitation to take part in this meeting. My being here today is meaningful in two ways. It is a sign of the value that my country attributes to international peace and security. It also expresses our recognition of the valuable support the United Nations has ceaselessly given to my country and other countries in our subregion in the resolution of recurring conflicts that jeopardize our stability and undermine our possibilities of achieving development.

My most ardent desire is that with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security, the solutions we come to at the end of this day of discussion make a substantial contribution to rendering more extensive, sound and efficient the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union. Indeed, I believe that if these solutions, despite their imperfections, manage separately to contain the damage caused by human folly, together and working in concert they would obtain even better results towards a safer, more human world.

The Security Council should therefore do more than just encourage; it should support regional efforts to maintain peace and security. It should integrate them into its global vision and should consider them in light of what they really are: regional components of its universal mission.

Peace is so precious that the quest for it, however frustrating it may be at times, cannot afford to put up with discouragement or, even less, neglect. It cannot be left to chance; it must rather be built, managed and maintained. To achieve that, the factors that often jeopardize peace must be identified, and we must learn from the experience of societies and peoples who have succeeded in taming it and who over the years have been able to enjoy the rewards that peace brings.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we have experienced years of war with our share of misery, misfortune and grief. Today, that regrettable interruption is fortunately finished. Certainly, pacification of the country is by no means complete. And even though our institutions have once again become legitimate, thanks to the fruition of political will following the constitutional referendum and general elections, they still need to be strengthened.

We have boundless determination to consolidate democracy; enhance the rule of law; complete the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; finalize the establishment of a professional, national and republican army and police force; operationalize an accountable judicial system that guarantees social peace; and create within the Great Lakes region, and more widely in Central Africa, a political environment stripped of all factors hindering peaceful coexistence among countries and peoples. It is in this context that the recent progress made, both internally and externally, including the signing of several agreements marking out the path towards peace in the east of our country, must be placed.

The persistence of conflict in the world in general and in Africa in particular has given rise to serious and complex problems. Among them are the large flows of refugees and internally displaced persons, the spread of infectious disease, the proliferation of increasingly harmful weapons and drugs, and the destruction of the environment and of biodiversity.

Fortunately, these issues, which form the daily lot of African societies, are at the heart of United Nations concerns. They therefore deserve joint attention and support of the United Nations and the African Union by virtue of the principles of the United Nations Charter and of the Constitutive Act of the African Union and of the powers of the two organizations, which in this case are complementary.

The United Nations is, in fact, the only organization that can lay down rules and standards that are imposed on all humankind and that can oblige the whole world to respect them, including by weapons. That is essential, given that the indirect and direct actors and protagonists in conflicts are sometimes not on the continents where the events are taking place. On the other hand, regional and subregional organizations are knowledgeable with regard to the sociological situation on the ground and are therefore the only ones that can even propose the most operational solutions to specific conflicts.

Recognizing this complementarity, we need to include among the special areas for cooperation between the United Nations and the AU the struggle against the illegal exploitation of natural resources in Africa; strengthening cooperation in conflict prevention and resolution, including the management of crises and peacebuilding and peacekeeping in post-conflict periods on the continent; supporting the 14 December 2006 decision by the AU Peace and Security Council regarding the Coordination and Consultation Mechanism between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council; and implementing the agreement on the organization of joint meetings between the AU Peace and Security Council and the Security Council at least once a year. Moreover, by virtue of the cooperation thus strengthened, the Secretary-General should be invited to appeal to the relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to intensify their efforts to support cooperation with the African Union.

More broadly speaking, the United Nations system, whose primary responsibility is to promote and maintain international peace and security, should increase its assistance to the AU with a view to reinforcing the institutional and operational capacity of its Peace and Security Council, inter alia, in early warning, through the regular, continuous and coordinated exchange of information, training of military and civilian personnel, and jointly carrying out certain mediation missions.

United Nations support should therefore extend to AU peacekeeping missions in its various member States, particularly in the sphere of communication and logistics; to strengthening peacebuilding capacities before and after the cessation of hostilities; and to supporting humanitarian actions undertaken by the Peace and Security Council, in conformity with the Charter and the protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council. The United Nations should support the establishment of the standby force and the African Military Commission, as well as greater professionalization and better operating of the brigades existing within subregional organizations such as the Economic Community for Central African States and the Southern African Development Community; and strengthening the institutional capacities of the regional centre for training and peacekeeping for AU member States.

To ensure the implementation and follow-up on the prevention and resolution of conflicts, it is important to strengthen the good offices missions and mediation capacities of the Secretary-General. Moreover, the Peacebuilding Support Office should be strengthened, the Peacebuilding Fund should expand its activities and, if necessary, a special fund for peacekeeping should be established. Such a fund would have the mission and the merit of ensuring that regional organizations have lasting and predictable funding for the peacekeeping operations that they undertake.

On another front, the widely recognized inability of preventive diplomacy to put an end to the new forms of armed violence in Africa cannot be ignored. If we are to preserve peace and prevent or manage conflicts, there is certainly a need for dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation. But also, and in particular, there is a need for order, respect for national and international law, strong and effective institutions and, above all, justice. And, regardless of how noble and useful those institutions may be, it must be not only transitional justice, but also, and in particular, justice that promotes and unapologetically enforces the law.

Indeed, prosecuting those responsible for serious crimes, without neglecting the aspect of compensation for the victims of such crimes, is essential if we wish to create the conditions for true reconciliation, to prevent recidivism and to re-establish respect for the sanctity of life and the inviolability of human dignity.

The world is becoming more globalized every day, together with the challenges facing us. Yet, regional specificities remain as important as ever, and the effectiveness of solutions depends on them. The right balance between the global and the regional is therefore the answer. With regard to Africa, it is up to us who are meeting here today to find that happy medium.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Djibrill Yipènè Bassole, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Burkina Faso, to take the floor.

**Mr. Bassole** (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on today's initiative and to convey to you the fraternal support and gratitude of the President of Burkina Faso for your dedication and personal involvement on behalf of peace and stability in Africa.

With regard to strengthening the relations between the United Nations and African regional organizations in the area of international peace and security, I should like to express our gratitude and support for the relevant recommendations made by the Secretary-General. In order to shorten my statement, Mr. President, I should like to associate myself with what you proposed and with what Mr. Kikwete, current Chairperson of the African Union, just said in his statement.

West Africa continues to be a theatre of conflicts, some of which are on the Security Council's agenda. As a subregional organization, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has equipped itself with a mechanism for conflict prevention and settlement, the Mediation and Security Council, and with a Council of the Wise, which seeks to prevent or effectively manage the conflicts in the subregion. ECOWAS has always believed that it had the responsibility for resolving crises, within the well-known framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Thanks to the actions of ECOWAS, the situation in most countries in crisis is certainly encouraging, although, at the regional level, we are still concerned by the situations in northern Mali and northern Niger and by threats such as drug trafficking and the illicit circulation of weapons of war. Together with the Security Council and the Secretary-General, we are following in particular the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. In his capacities as current Chairman of ECOWAS and Facilitator of the inter-Ivorian dialogue, President Blaise Compaoré has been able, thanks to the vision and statesmanship of President Laurent Gbagbo, who took the courageous political initiative of a direct dialogue, Prime Minister Guillaume Soro and the Ivorian political class, to achieve the signing, on 4 March 2007, of the Ouagadougou Agreement and, subsequently, of its supplementary agreements.

Those agreements are, in our view, a successful example of good collaboration among the United Nations, the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS. While they emphasize national ownership of the peace process, they were concluded as a result of regional facilitation and benefited from international assistance. One year after its signing, the Ouagadougou Agreement is recognized as having paved the way for a genuine way out of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. But, above all, it is the support of the principal actors for the process that has been the main driving force. Here, as elsewhere, that support was possible only because they were fully involved in defining dispute resolution mechanisms, assumed ownership of those mechanisms and participated in their implementation. Moreover, placing the negotiation process within a subregional framework certainly provided for a better definition of parameters and the establishment of the best possible conditions for success.

In order to illustrate the originality of the peace process, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire has described it in these terms: national ownership, subregional leadership and international assistance. We also note with satisfaction the engagement of Mr. Choi Young-Jin alongside us with humility and pragmatism. A good complementary sharing of responsibilities with the Representative of the Facilitator, Mr. Boureima Badini, has enabled us to have harmonious assistance in emerging from the crisis. However, we hope that, as with peacekeeping operations, mediations of this type also benefit from predictable, available and sufficient resources, since they have often been carried out in difficult contexts.

Those are, we believe, some of the lessons that could be drawn from this process. We earnestly hope that it will be successfully concluded with the adoption of an electoral timetable that sets the date for the first round of presidential elections on 30 November 2008. Our wish is that peace and stability will return very soon to Côte d'Ivoire and that the country can benefit as swiftly as possible from the support of the Peacebuilding Commission to ensure stability and economic progress there. Speaking of the Commission, we should like to take this opportunity to commend its work and to express our hope for greater involvement by the African Union in its activities.

I cannot conclude my statement without drawing the attention of the Security Council to the current international economic context, characterized by a general rise in the prices of foodstuffs, which has caused scattered riots likely to destabilize a good many countries, particularly in Africa, where the phenomenon of poverty could be further exacerbated. It would thus be desirable, from the perspective of strengthening the relations between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of maintaining international peace and security, to place particular emphasis on socio-economic factors, such as price

increases, which are likely to cause new crises in some of our States.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Pham Binh Minh, Special Envoy of the President of Viet Nam, to take the floor.

**Mr. Pham Binh Minh** (Viet Nam): On behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and the delegation of South Africa on your effective leadership of the work of the Council this month. We highly appreciate your initiative to hold a debate on this important topic, and I am confident that, under your skilful leadership, this meeting will arrive at a successful conclusion.

We are facing fast and complex changes in the world, in which peace and cooperation for development remain the dominant trend, though challenges arising from both traditional and non-traditional security issues have increased at the regional level. More than ever before, the international community recognizes the pressing need for a stronger relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations in responding to challenges to regional and international peace and security.

The Charter of the United Nations places on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Despite the fact that the Security Council has yet to find a lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, notwithstanding tremendous efforts, the initial positive steps in the transition from conflict to peace in countries like Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burundi and recently the Democratic Republic of the Congo are testimony to what the Security Council can do to bring peace and security to the people of Africa.

As the Secretary-General noted in his 2007 report on the work of the Organization (A/62/1), there has been a dramatic increase in the range of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Heads of State and Government at the 2005 World Summit agreed to expand consultation and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations through formalized agreements and, as appropriate, the involvement of regional organizations in the work of the Security Council. Various resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council on cooperation between the United Nations and specific regional organizations help further promote such cooperation.

On the implementation front, we are convinced that cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations should be based on their complementary capacities and comparative advantages, making full use of their experience, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the relevant statutes of regional organizations. Regional organizations, owing to their most immediate connection to regional particularities, are well positioned to understand the root causes of armed conflicts and have unique advantages to detect potential threats early and find peaceful solutions to those problems. Better coordination and the development of a more effective partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations will strengthen the capacity of the Security Council to fulfil its task of maintaining international peace and security. At the same time, the United Nations and the Security Council should pay greater attention to the issue of providing political, physical and financial assistance to peacekeeping efforts of regional organizations that lack resources.

Equally important, possible modalities of partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations must be further explored and expanded for mutual reinforcement, taking into account the differing characteristics of regional organizations in terms of membership, resource availability and institutional capacity, as well as the uniqueness of each conflict situation.

Africa, the second largest and second most populous continent, is where most regional conflicts are taking place. Together with United Nations peacekeeping operations, the African Union (AU) has proactively contributed to the mediation, reconciliation and reconstruction processes in many countries such as Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, the Sudan, Uganda and Western Sahara. The Governments and the peoples of Africa and the African Union must be commended for their determined efforts in this connection.

We welcome the adoption of the Declaration signed by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the AU Commission in November 2006 on enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of capacity-building over the next 10 years (A/61/630, annex), as well as the ongoing close coordination between the two

secretariats. Given the many existing challenges ahead, Viet Nam is of the view that the AU should be supported in playing a greater role and should therefore enjoy greater cooperation from the United Nations in term of financial and logistical assistance for building the capacity of its peacekeeping forces, so as to consolidate peace in fragile post-conflict countries and help prevent a relapse into violence. The difficulties facing the African Union Mission in Somalia and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur are vivid examples demonstrating how necessary this is.

In our region of South-East Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has become an important mechanism for strengthening peace, friendship and cooperation in the region. ASEAN has also attached great importance to fostering consultations and exchanging experiences and best practices with other regional organizations in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America to promote multilateral endeavours for peace, stability and development.

As a brother and friend of Africa and as a member of ASEAN, Viet Nam has always been at the forefront of any efforts aimed at strengthening the partnership for peace and development between the two organizations. We look forward to further promoting these efforts in the interest of peace, security and development in Asia, Africa and throughout the world.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, the President of Somalia, to take the floor.

**President Ahmed**: It is my pleasure to be here at this special meeting of the Security Council. I am grateful to those who brought about our gathering here today to debate the important issue of strengthening the relationship between the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Let me take this opportunity to reaffirm Somalia's appreciation and its approval of the Security Council, which has taken a consistent and laudable role at each juncture of Somalia's civil strife and State failure. The Security Council, as all may remember, had the resolve and the political will to invoke the morally compelling doctrine of humanitarian intervention, thereby successfully reversing a disastrous famine that could have potentially wiped out millions of Somalis.

It is my considered judgement that Somalia once again needs courageous intervention of this body to intervene in the situation in Somalia by urgently sending an international force to assist the Transitional Federal Government in implementing its peace and stabilization plan.

The conflict in Somalia, which was once among clans, is today about extreme ideology and predatory economic and commercial interests. The conflict is in fact between those who want to live free in peace and harmony under democratic governance and those who espouse violence and want to keep Somalia in the status quo of lawlessness and anarchy.

The solution to the problem in Somalia therefore has three basic but important ingredients, namely, re-establishing the collapsed Somali State, furthering the reconciliation process and stabilizing the situation and providing security.

On reconciliation, we conducted the largest reconciliation congress in the history of Somalia. The National Reconciliation Congress, which was held in Mogadishu, was attended by close to 3,000 delegates and attracted many more peace-loving Somalis to the city. The National Reconciliation Congress produced corrective solutions in government affairs and a road map to a fair and free election that would lead Somalia to a democratic transition in 2009. In addition, the Transitional Federal Government has time and again shown a willingness to talk to those who oppose our Government.

Furthermore, I would like to formally restate at this meeting of the Security Council that I am for peace and reconciliation in Somalia. My only purpose in leading Somalia during this critical period of our history is to bring peace and lawfulness back to my country. I would like to state categorically that I want to witness the renaissance of Somalia as a progressive democratic State at peace with itself, with its neighbours and with the rest of the world. I am willing to do whatever it takes to promote peace and stability in my country.

The third basic and important ingredient of providing security is where we have not performed well, and it is where we cannot make progress without significant support from the international community.

Security is of paramount importance to any country of the world, and it is a prerequisite for the rest of the priorities to which I have referred. The lack of security in Somalia is compounded by the continuation of the United Nations embargo.

The Security Council must assist the efforts of the Transitional Federal Government in the stabilization of the country by, first, reviewing the merits of the arms embargo on Somalia and promptly lifting it; secondly, authorizing the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force with a mandate to help Somalia to achieve fuller reconciliation, stabilization, disarmament and durable peace; and, thirdly, helping Somalia in the formation of the security organs of the Government, such as the police, military and other security forces.

Finally, the prevalence of pirates off the Somali coast is hampering international trade and international marine safety and navigation. As Somalia cannot at the moment guard its long coastline, we would want to authorize the international community to take action to combat piracy on Somalia's high seas until we can effectively undertake the security of our territorial waters.

**The President**: I now invite Her Excellency Mrs. Rama Yade, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights of France, to take the floor.

**Mrs. Yade** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to thank South Africa and President Thabo Mbeki for having organized this meeting on a subject that is at the heart of the Security Council's mandate and work.

In an age when the destinies of peoples and nations are linked, peace and security on the African continent are challenges we all share. The future of Africa is also our future. Its successes or failures today will be ours tomorrow. It is by working together that we will meet the challenges of development, peace and security.

Motivated by that powerful conviction, last September President Sarkozy took the initiative to hold a high-level Security Council meeting on the issue of peace and security in Africa. Africa must find its rightful place in globalization. Global affairs cannot be addressed without Africa. There will be no successful globalization without a strong Africa that is sure of itself. But its efforts and successes must be supported and backed up by the international community. France therefore believes in a strengthened partnership between the United Nations and African Union.

Africa is a continent on the move. It is part of the momentum in the world. Africa's youthful population, vibrant and impatient, is sweeping it along and opening it to the winds of modernity and democracy. Sustained economic growth is encouraging remarkable successes in many countries. Its active and growing role in international bodies is bearing fruit in the settlement of many conflicts.

Africa is a continent that is organizing itself. The African Union, whose institutions and role continue to develop in parallel to subregional organizations, reflects its desire to take its future into its own hands. The African Union is already taking on a substantial role in international responses to crises.

But Africa is also a continent that continues to face considerable challenges, beginning with those related to poverty, health, climate change and access to natural resources, especially water. Africa is endeavouring to meet those challenges.

We are determined to help it through concrete actions — with regard to food security, for example. The riots caused by hunger are triggering a new emergency, with catastrophic results. How can we accept that people are dying of hunger in the twenty-first century? We have seen in recent days the tragic consequences of the sharp rise and volatility of prices for basic foodstuffs, which have been hurting the most vulnerable African populations for many months. Yet food security is one of the conditions for peace, stability and development in Africa.

The international community must mobilize immediately to find solutions with the World Food Programme as a matter of urgency and over the long term, by placing agricultural development and land management at the top of the international agenda. Peace and development are not built with empty stomachs. France and the European Union are preparing proposals in that connection. The United Nations must act to meet this new global challenge. Like the African Union, the Organization should help African countries to meet those challenges and should do so in four areas.

First, the United Nations should take preventive action in order to avert open crises. France supports the

Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen United Nations efforts at preventive diplomacy. The early warning system established by the African Union is an important development for the continent in that regard.

The African Union is setting up its peace and security architecture so as to be able to prevent and address by itself the continent's crises. For its part, the United Nations continues to improve its conflict-prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding capacities through reform of the Secretariat and the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission. The relations developing between the Security Council, on which the United Nations Charter confers the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and the African Union Peace and Security Council are a good illustration of cooperation between the two organizations.

The second objective is to respond to crises. To meet those challenges, the United Nations Charter confers on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Chapter VIII of the Charter also provides for the role of regional organizations in that respect. Institutional development is not an end in itself, however. It is on the basis of results that cooperation between our two organizations has to be judged. In Darfur, for instance, acting in an original way, the two organizations are deploying a hybrid operation and conducting joint mediation. It is not always an easy situation to manage. The deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur is blocked at this time. It is imperative that the Operation be able to discharge its mandate to help the people of Darfur, who are the primary victims, and the humanitarian operators who come to their aid.

Indeed, we are increasingly concerned by the rise in the number of serious human rights violations against women, through increased sexual violence, and children in situations of armed conflict in particular. The fight against impunity must be an essential element of our action. States must cooperate with the International Criminal Court. Without resolute action against impunity, there can be no peace or lasting reconciliation.

Peace and national reconciliation processes must also be supported until free elections, transparent and open to all, can be held, as in Côte d'Ivoire. Such security, humanitarian and political aspects go hand in hand. They cannot advance without all the others, as we are also seeing in the case of Somalia, where we cannot hope to improve living conditions for a greatly suffering population over the long term without progress in the political process. That is the thrust of our common efforts.

The third objective is to assist democratic change and further respect for human rights. We must heed the call of peoples and civil societies for the rule of law, honest and transparent elections and the protection of fundamental freedoms. We see the consequences for stability and civil peace when overtures to democracy come late. Such was the case in Kenya. It is the case today in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean people must not be deprived of its victory, which is the victory of democracy.

The final objective is to build peace in countries that have successfully completed a transition process. I am thinking of the current efforts in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, the Central African Republic and the Great Lakes region — Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — with Governments democratically elected after a transition process.

I would like to conclude by speaking of Europe's commitment. France fully aligns itself with the statement that will be made by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union (EU). There will be no strong Europe without a strong Africa. That is the full meaning of the partnership reached between the European Union and Africa in Lisbon in December. The European Union is deeply committed to strengthening African peacekeeping capacities, support for African Union operations and the conduct of United Nations-mandated operations in Africa, such as the current EU-led peacekeeping operation in Chad and the Central African Republic, which seeks to protect people and facilitate humanitarian assistance in regions neighbouring Darfur affected by that crisis. France, during its upcoming presidency of the European Union, will emphasize cooperative action in support of the African peace and security architecture, and support for the processes of stabilization and reconciliation.

France resolutely supports the ambition of Africa and its peoples to build a continent of stability and prosperity that takes a full part in the workings of the world. We are fully involved in that effort under the

auspices of the United Nations, alongside the African Union and with all Africa's partners.

**The President**: I call on His Excellency Mr. Pierre Chevalier, Special Envoy of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Belgium.

**Mr. Chevalier** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I wish to commend and, above all, to thank you, Sir, for organizing today's very important debate. We welcome the resolve of Africa and its leadership to bring peace, security and development to their continent. I can assure you that we share your conviction that those objectives can be achieved only if mutual cooperation is genuinely strengthened.

Belgium fully endorses the statement to be made by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union (EU), setting out the results of and prospects for partnership between Africa and the EU. Belgium also welcomes the impressive progress made over the past few years in cooperation between the United Nations and the EU and the United Nations and the African Union (AU), as well as in their trilateral relationship, in the area of conflict management.

Belgium firmly believes in the added value of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. We believe that such cooperation should be based on a solid mutual understanding of what it can yield and of what can legitimately be expected of it. If a regional organization decides to establish a peacekeeping operation authorized by the Security Council under Chapter VIII of the Charter, the Council is validating the international legality of the operation. Such authorization, however, does not imply that the United Nations is substituting itself for the regional organization or that it is automatically assuming political, logistical or financial responsibility.

The situation is somewhat different when the United Nations decides to support the operation of a regional organization. In the case of a joint operation, the United Nations and the regional organization are both responsible for the preparation and conduct of the operation. That is a particularly complex form of cooperation that can succeed only if it is based on a common political vision.

In order to avoid all misunderstandings, appropriate consultations between the organizations are vital, especially in the initial decision-making phase. Such consultations must help to prevent decisions made by one party from taking the other by surprise and to facilitate cooperation in their implementation. They should also allow us better to determine the kind of cooperation that is most appropriate, based on the nature and geographical characteristics of a given conflict.

Common experiences and lessons learned will help us to improve cooperation between international organizations. The African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur is in and of itself a unique experiment. However, the stakes are extremely high, since they involve the fate of a local population that has endured terrible suffering in recent years. Unfortunately, we must conclude that progress in deploying the mission has been far too slow. At the same time, the political process that was to be the foundation of the peacekeeping operation seems to be at a standstill. In that context, a strong, shared political vision of the two organizations involved — the United Nations and the AU — is critical.

In Central Africa, too, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi have benefited from useful cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the EU has contributed to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through the EU-led force in that country, while in Burundi, significant cooperation has been established with the AU through the Regional Initiative and the United Nations Office in Burundi on the question of the Forces nationales de libération.

In spite of the great progress made in those countries — with regard to the democratic electoral process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to give just one significant example — the challenges are considerable. Peace remains fragile, and civilians, who deserve the international community's protection, continue to face daily violence. Belgium will remain strongly committed in its support for the countries and peoples of the Great Lakes region, and we will continue to work closely with the United Nations, with African regional organizations and with the European Union. In that connection, the Belgian Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, Development and Defence will travel together to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to Burundi next week.

Turning to the conflict in Somalia, let me first commend the members of the African Union Mission

in Somalia for the work they have done in difficult conditions. The Mission clearly demonstrates that international efforts to bring security to the Somali people will achieve lasting results only if they are based on sincere efforts towards national political reconciliation. Belgium therefore fully supports the integrated and gradual approach recently proposed by the Secretary-General. Such an approach gives us another opportunity to develop cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations and to demonstrate the value it can add.

Finally, I wish to say a few words about the situation in Zimbabwe. I would like to stress that Belgium is particularly concerned at the increased tension in that country. We join others — in particular the Secretary-General — in calling for decisive action, including through the immediate release of the results of the recent presidential election, in order to prevent the deterioration of a situation that is already very tense. I agree with Prime Minister Gordon Brown that a very clear, unanimous signal is needed.

Let me conclude with some observations about the general principles of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In the view of Belgium, improved governance is imperative in that regard. A Government that meets expectations, merits trust and is committed to democracy and human rights will be better equipped to eliminate the root causes of conflict. Natural resources can be an important factor here: depending on how they are managed, they can either fuel conflict or bring a peace dividend. Responsibility in this sphere lies in particular with national Governments, but the United Nations and regional organizations should take account of this dimension in their activities aimed at restoring, maintaining and building peace.

The European Union is an example of a regional cooperation project which has developed in a way that none of its founders could have imagined 50 years ago. The African Union, for its part, is powerfully committed to blazing its own trail — a trail that is not yet completely charted. The European Union and Belgium are ready to assist it in developing the capacities necessary to overcome the challenges it faces. I welcome the similar readiness of the United Nations, which will be reflected in the adoption of a draft resolution on cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations. Belgium commends the two organizations for that outcome, and hopes that it will be promptly implemented both in letter and, especially, in spirit.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, to take the floor.

**Mr. Zenawi** (Ethiopia): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to join previous speakers in commending you for your initiative, in South Africa's capacity as President of the Security Council for this month, to organize this timely meeting. The meeting could pave the way to more effective collaboration between our institutions.

We all know that primary responsibility for international peace and security lies with the Security Council. In that regard, the Council has been dealing with security challenges in Africa on a continuous basis. Indeed, as our continent has over the years had more than its fair share of conflicts, African issues have constituted a very significant part of the Security Council's deliberations on peace and security. We in Africa too have been exerting efforts to prevent, resolve and manage conflicts on our continent, including through the establishment of a comprehensive peace and security architecture within the African Union. We bring a number of strengths to the table in resolving African conflicts.

I am confident that we would all agree that there is a great deal of room for fruitful collaboration between the two institutions, consistent with the Security Council's primacy in terms of its responsibility for international peace and security. In that regard, I welcome the report of the Secretary-General on this matter (S/2008/186) and, in particular, his proposal to establish a panel to look at the issue of ensuring predictable, sustainable and flexible funding for peace operations of the African Union. I would like to urge the Security Council to speedily consider the recommendations of such a panel, and to act on them, as such a funding arrangement could be crucial in saving many African lives. As this process is bound to take some time, I would urge the Security Council, in the meantime, to support the African Union in its peacekeeping operations on the continent, particularly in Somalia. The African Union was unable to deploy the full contingent of peacekeepers in Somalia solely because of a lack of funding, and with the support of the Security Council Africa will be better able to support the people and the Government of Somalia in achieving peace.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, to take the floor.

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased, Sir, to welcome you and to congratulate you on the Republic of South Africa's successful presidency of the Security Council. We welcome the participation in today's meeting of leaders of African and European States, other representatives and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Such high interest in today's Council meeting reflects the international community's commitment to meeting the challenge of bringing stability to the situation in Africa and ensuring sustainable development on the continent.

The threats that African States face today can be overcome only through collective political and diplomatic action and through unified efforts by African countries and the international community that supports them. The development of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union will help to achieve that. The provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter provide a firm legal basis for the implementation of African peacekeeping operations sanctioned or supported by the Security Council.

Combining the efforts of the United Nations and the African Union, taking account of the comparative advantages offered by that important regional organization, is proving its effectiveness. Today, regional and subregional organizations in Africa are participating actively in preventing and settling conflict situations and are demonstrating increasing willingness and ability to assume responsibility for resolving African problems.

The potential of African countries to counter crises must be developed in every respect to comprehensively encompass the areas of crisis prevention, crisis resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding. It is essential that the conflict prevention and settlement mechanisms created on the continent begin to work at full strength. Russia has consistently urged that the peacekeeping activities of the African Union be appropriately bolstered by the authority of the Security Council and by the world Organization's logistical and technical capacity, on the understanding that we are not talking about directly financing such activities from the United Nations budget.

It is essential to improve the practice of regular reporting by regional bodies to the Security Council, especially where their peacekeeping operations have a mandate from this organ, with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It is our view that the main responsibility for effective implementation of the mandates of those operations rests squarely on regional organizations and their members.

In the area of practical interaction between the United Nations and the African Union (AU), the impulse for which came from decisions of the 2005 Summit, there is already substantial accumulated positive experience. Joint peacekeeping forces in Darfur were established under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union and are making efforts to advance the political process. In Chad and the Central African Republic, we have established a multi-component United Nations peacekeeping presence, acting with support from the European Union operations. It is important through these joint efforts to ensure that innovative models of cooperation prove their effectiveness.

On the agenda is the comprehensive strengthening of the partnership between the United Nations and African Union. We are in favour of strengthening cooperation between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council. Constructive dialogue between the two organs is taking place on a regular basis. Provisions in the joint communiqué issued at the end of the meeting between the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council in Addis Ababa have become an important springboard for this process. We would expect that tomorrow's second joint meeting of these two organs will move this interaction forward.

The Russian Federation is enhancing its contribution to the settlement of African conflicts. Our country is actively participating in developing and implementing programmes for international assistance in Africa, including through the Group of Eight. Specialized Russian educational institutions are training African peacekeeping personnel. Russian peacekeepers are engaged in all United Nations operations on the continent. Furthermore, we are planning an ongoing upgrade of our level of participation in United Nations peacekeeping activity in Africa as well as in other regions.

In conclusion, I would like to express the willingness of the Russian delegation to support South Africa's draft Security Council resolution aimed at strengthening interaction with regional organizations and especially with the African Union.

**Mr. Ettalhi** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is indeed a great honour, Mr. Mbeki, to see you personally assume the presidency of Security Council today. It is my pleasure to convey to you the greetings and support of your brother, Colonel Al-Qaddafi.

We are also honoured to have with us heads of State or Government, ministers and heads of delegations. We welcome the presence of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Oumar Konaré, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. We certainly appreciate all of their efforts.

I congratulate you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting, as it paves the way for our meeting tomorrow with the African Union Peace and Security Council. We have set great expectations on that meeting, as the topic falls squarely within the core functions and objectives of our two Councils as stated in their statutes. The topic is very important and not enough time has been provided to expand on it. Therefore I shall provide a written statement for distribution and will merely stress some important points here today.

My country fully agrees with the statement made by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chairperson of the African Union, Mr. Jakaya Kikwete.

This proceeds from the important concept paper prepared by the presidency stressing the need for a practical movement ensuring effective long-term participation by both regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter, in Chapter VIII, specifically recognizes such a role for those organizations. Many international resolutions and declarations have stressed the importance of the participation of regional and subregional organizations — particularly with regard to conflict prevention and finding effective joint measures to deal with the root causes of threats to peace — as being fundamental international commitments and objectives provided for in the United Nations Charter.

My country, Libya, has been committed to the prevention and settlement of African conflicts and, as an African member of this Security Council, we have come to understand the urgent need for a more comprehensive international framework for such efforts. There has certainly been recognition of Africa's development and its role in a collective security organization based primarily on the efforts of regional and subregional organizations in the prevention of disputes.

However, let me also state that, frankly, we continue to need to prove that practical measures must take precedence over rhetoric and that long-term conflict resolution remain the priority. The Secretariat continues to lack the necessary resources for logistical support of national and regional capacities, and therefore insufficient efforts have been made to prevent conflicts at their source. The price has been very high. We now face humanitarian situations with spreading tragedies and ramifications. We are also incurring enormous expenditures related to conflict management, as well as peacekeeping operations with no end in sight.

No one, of course, would argue that there is one simple prescription for prevention. Such an effort would require a diagnosis of the causes of such conflicts, which are complex and interrelated. The prescription is necessarily complex: internal, regional and, specifically, international.

Article 1 of the United Nations Charter includes, among the purposes and principles of the Organization, upholding principles of equal rights and self-determination for all peoples and assisting them in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems.

There has been increasing appreciation for the growing role of the African Union, under difficult circumstances, particularly since the establishment of its Peace and Security Council, as an entity entrusted with decision-making, in partnership with the United Nations. The Council has been active in many of the cases that have been raised here this morning.

Africa does not seek a narrow continental interest nor do we seek to be dealt with with modesty, as the late leader Léopold Senghor said. Africa's security and development are an essential component of the collective global security system. Furthermore, the mandate and procedures of the United Nations Security

Council cannot be separated from those of the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Structural strategies aimed at conflict prevention in Africa have evolved as a result of valuable reports submitted regularly by the Secretary-General, particularly since the end of the last century. Two important reports have been submitted in the past few months. It is now up to us to implement the recommendations set out in those reports and to capitalize on the exceptional momentum achieved thus far. In Addis Ababa last year, the foundations were laid for relations between the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. Annual meetings have been scheduled. Sharing experiences and information with regard to current conflicts and seeking ways to cooperate in order to prevent such conflicts have become established practices that are welcomed by all.

Finally, I believe that we must now begin our work to formalize a global-regional partnership, in which all United Nations bodies should be encouraged to participate. Such a partnership should guarantee, in the context of Chapter VIII of the Charter, the integration of resources, priorities, capacities and mandates, assigning them according to comparative advantages and areas of strength. Contrary to the notion that the United Nations must not provide funding unless it has control, it should provide support to the African Union and its security structure both logistically and financially. We hope that that will be the outcome of today's deliberations. Only such a partnership will enable us to face the real challenges and, as stated in the most recent report of the Secretary-General, to develop more planned, consistent and reliable arrangements.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the delegation of South Africa for the draft resolution before us. We fully endorse it and look forward to its adoption at the end of this meeting.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Mompati Merafhe, Vice-President of Botswana, to take the floor.

**Mr. Merafhe** (Botswana): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We are particularly grateful to you for your initiative in organizing this high-level meeting to deliberate on an issue of the utmost importance to Africa and the wider international community. Indeed, the fact that you are presiding over this meeting is a clear testimony of your commitment and of the determination of your country, South Africa, to consistently use its membership of the Council to elevate to a global level the African agenda of achieving durable peace, security and sustainable development. Our presence here today is a clear demonstration of our full support for this initiative.

We strongly believe in the instrumentality of the United Nations and, in particular, of the Security Council, as the organ vested with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Peace is indivisible. The search for solutions to conflict is the responsibility of all. It is therefore imperative and urgent that we assume collective ownership of these challenges.

Africa has the political will and determination to work alongside other countries in the prevention of conflict as well as in the management and resolution of disputes. In that respect, Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations provides for cooperation with regional organizations, such as the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Therefore, there can be no doubt that, when the African Union deploys a peacekeeping mission in an African country, it does so on behalf of the Security Council and of the international community as a whole. As the United Nations recognizes the advantages of regional organizations in responding timeously to an outbreak of war in a given region, it is necessary that that recognition be translated into practical measures that can strengthen this relationship for the common good. A clearly defined partnership would achieve not only faster results in alleviating human suffering, but also better cohesion and alignment and efficient utilization of resources in peacekeeping operations.

Regional organizations, such as the African Union, have a crucial role to play in enhancing the capacity of the United Nations to respond more timeously and efficiently in the prevention of armed hostilities. That is vital if we are to save human lives as well as improve the credibility of the mission of the United Nations.

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union embodies the strong resolve of Africa to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. It is a

dependable mechanism that the international community should support and put to good use.

We have to acknowledge that there are capacity constraints. A lack of adequate resources severely hampers Africa's ability to successfully execute and sustain peacekeeping operations. We believe that financial and material resources can be mobilized to assist regional organizations in effectively carrying out peacekeeping operations.

Issues related to peace and security in Africa are urgent and important. This is not the first time that the Council has considered this matter at the summit level. There is a time to talk and negotiate. Clearly, there should also be a time for action and results.

In that respect, it is our expectation that the outcome of this meeting will be practical and measurable. We urge the Council to adopt a draft resolution that can set in motion concrete measures aimed at translating into reality our hope that the necessary support will be provided to the African Union peacekeeping missions. We strongly believe that the proposals put forward are realistic and achievable. We encourage the Council to adopt them. We must now put in place a granite foundation in the area of conflict prevention and management, to ensure that the continuing threat to development and economic prosperity in Africa is brought to an end.

I wish to conclude by reiterating what I said before this Council two years ago. Our business as States Members of the United Nations is to take out of business the business of making war. We must invest more resources in the capacity of both the United Nations and the African Union to make peace. Mediation and good offices must be strengthened, so that conflict does not break out because of a poverty of diplomacy or a lack of capacity to prevent, manage and resolve disputes.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Neven Jurica, Permanent Representative of Croatia, to take the floor.

**Mr. Jurica** (Croatia): First of all, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this exchange of views on peace and security in Africa. We sincerely believe that today's deliberations will help us to take stock of the lessons learned and to better understand future challenges. Let me also join previous speakers in thanking the Secretary-General for his pertinent and valuable remarks, as well as for his active engagement in promoting effective cooperation and collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations in general and the African Union in particular.

Croatia recognizes the primary responsibility and leading role of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, as the only global body mandated with that task. Nevertheless, that global task can be accomplished more effectively with active engagement at the regional, subregional and national levels. Optimally, those three levels of responsibility — global, regional and national — should, owing to their intertwining nature, act in harmony, respecting the principles of subsidiarity, division of labour and effectiveness, in order to achieve peace and security. In that respect, regional organizations should assume their share of the responsibility, as appropriate, in this global-regional partnership mechanism.

The unique knowledge and local expertise of regional organizations often place them in a better position to assess regional and local situations.

The question remains of how to make the best use of these assessments. Having said that, Croatia believes that the Security Council should evaluate regional initiatives on their own merits and contributions, especially as they are complementary to the continued and active engagement of the overall United Nations system, for example in supporting peace processes and peacekeeping operations in Africa.

Here, we come to the first point that my delegation would like to raise: capacity-building as a way of enhancing regional organizations' effectiveness and efficiency in conflict prevention, management and resolution. My delegation attaches particular importance to security sector reform, as discussed in numerous reports of the Secretary-General, in particular taking into consideration the input and expertise of his Special Representatives in the field. In that respect, we acknowledge some encouraging developments in West and Central Africa.

Secondly, we would like to single out one particular concept, conflict prevention, which could and should be strengthened and given more prominence in the work of this global-regional partnership. We can all agree that experience teaches us that any crisis can be better handled in its early stages. Therefore, an approach encompassing a better early warning system as a means to identify potential

crises before they emerge is of utmost importance. On that point, we welcome the meeting regarding Zimbabwe convened by the Southern African Development Community last week in Lusaka.

My delegation is very concerned about the recent situation in Zimbabwe, especially as we firmly believe that every nation has the right to enjoy the benefits of democracy, and not to have them denied, as seems to be the case in Zimbabwe. On the other hand, Kenya provided a good example of timely intervention by a regional mediation mission, led by former Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

The third point we would like to make relates to the need for new thinking and innovative functional approaches. There is one lesson that we always like to repeat: there can be no one-size-fits-all approach, and any attempt to build upon such an approach necessarily leads to failure. The Sudan is an excellent example, where the Security Council is working together with the African Union to create a special relationship in addressing the ongoing crisis in that country. Thought should be given to using a similar model in other conflict areas.

Fourthly, in response to the growing need to develop a comprehensive approach encompassing political, military, humanitarian and development components in the post-conflict period, we recognize the valuable goals and role of the Peacebuilding Commission. The Commission has been successful in its tailored approach, and within that framework we see an excellent opportunity for meaningful cooperation with regional and subregional organizations.

Allow me to reflect here upon a matter that my Government deems to be of utmost significance. There has been a great deal of talk about the danger of the culture of impunity taking root in some of the conflict-ridden areas of Africa. We would like to reiterate that there can be no lasting peace without justice — and development, of course — and that justice is vital to any reconciliation process and to the building of a healthy society.

Finally, Croatia acknowledged that the formation of the African Union back in 2002 was a major step forward in strengthening Africa's regional political-security structures and conflict prevention mechanisms. Also, I would like to note that Croatia established formal relations with the African Union in May 2007, and subsequently participated in an African Union summit for the first time, in Accra in June and July 2007.

Croatia also aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the Permanent Representative of Slovenia on behalf of the European Union.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your personal dedication to peace and stability in Africa and elsewhere, and for your presence here at this fruitful debate.

**The President**: I invite His Excellency Mr. Zalmay Khalilzad, Permanent Representative of the United States, to take the floor.

**Mr. Khalilzad** (United States of America): I would like to thank you, President Mbeki, for convening this important meeting.

President Bush noted upon his return from a recent trip to Africa that there have been striking changes in Africa, which are the result of a new generation of African leaders. The United States supports democratic transition and economic development in African countries, working in particular in post-conflict situations to strengthen democratic institutions and across Africa assisting civil society organizations in combating gender-based violence, trafficking in persons and other human rights violations.

Despite substantial improvements, we face enormous challenges. The focus of today's discussion is on how the Security Council can cooperate and enhance its relationship with the continent's regional organizations, particularly the African Union (AU).

As we all know, United Nations peacekeeping is overstretched. The supply of well equipped peacekeepers does not meet the demand. We must find ways to use existing resources effectively and efficiently and to build capacity, particularly regional capacity, to do more. This will take time, so we must look at both short-term and longer-term solutions. With that in mind, I would like to make five points.

First, the Security Council needs to reassess how we plan for and sustain peacekeeping operations. Our peacekeeping operations should be goal-oriented in nature and should clearly define missions, timelines and budgets. Peacekeeping operations should be a means to an end, rather than a substitute for resolving

conflicts or an excuse for delay. While we understand the risks of leaving too soon, we should look to terminate non-viable peacekeeping operations. The goal must be to encourage self-reliance and free up forces and funds for where they are needed most: places like Darfur, where the United Nations is collaborating with the African Union to address a dire regional crisis.

On the subject of Darfur, the United Nations and AU have embarked on a historic cooperative effort: the deployment of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). Although it is much too early to judge whether that cooperation has been successful, the early results suggest that UNAMID will not become a model to be followed in other places of shared United Nations-AU concerns. The United States continues to call for the immediate and full deployment of UNAMID, both to improve the situation on the ground in Darfur and to demonstrate that the AU and the United Nations can form formidable partnerships. The Government of the Sudan must lift all restrictions and delays to allow for all UNAMID troops and equipment to be deployed.

Secondly, the AU must enhance its capacity to plan and execute viable peacekeeping operations, and we should help. As we all know, the African Union needs to build increased administrative, logistical and military planning capacities, as well as better financial accountability and transparency. To that end, the United States has substantial programmes to assist these efforts. We have provided significant support in the form of logistical support and technical expertise to the African standby force, to the AU Commission's emerging Strategic Planning and Management Unit and to the AU's Situation Room. The United States continues to provide significant logistical capability in support of both United Nations and AU peacekeeping efforts in Africa. We are prepared to work with the AU and other regional organizations to further enhance their capacity, and we call on all other countries to step up their bilateral support as well. The United Nations should prioritize its efforts to help the AU deal with its deficits in financial management and administrative capacities. Improvement in this area will undoubtedly help donor countries feel more comfortable in giving resources to AU missions, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

The United States would like to recognize the AU's efforts to stabilize and improve the situation in Somalia. Over the past two years, the United States has provided over $57 million to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), and we continue to seek additional resources to support that critical effort. We call on all AU member States to send forces for that important mission, and we call on the international community to donate generously so that AMISOM can deploy fully. In addition to AMISOM, we support the Secretary-General's call for a credible political process and security presence, which the United States believes should lead to a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

Thirdly, we must work with African Union member States to increase their national peacekeeping capacities. The United States is committed to helping African States to increase their capacities. Since 2005, the United States has trained over 34,000 African peacekeepers from 19 countries and has provided $375 million to increase global capacity for peacekeeping operations in Africa and elsewhere. Additionally, we see an opportunity for several African countries to increase their capacity for combined and joint operations by stressing interoperability in equipment, training and communication and by building professional relationships among officers of all African nations. Steps such as these will enhance overall AU peacekeeping capacity and will be a focus for the new United States Africa Command.

Fourthly, funding for AU peacekeeping capacities is important. The United States is well aware of the financial shortfalls that the AU faces, especially in peacekeeping missions. We welcome the exploration of realistic ways to address the financing challenges faced by regional peacekeeping missions. In that regard, we support the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of a panel of distinguished persons from the African Union, the United Nations and other relevant stakeholders to seek viable alternative and cost-effective means of financial support, such as the establishment of a trust fund or enhanced donor coordination.

Fifthly, with regard to closer United Nations-AU cooperation, in the realm of peace and security, we applaud the formation of the joint United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations-AU Peace Support Team and its work in the areas of mission planning and the management of logistics and resources. In the area of conflict prevention and mediation, the United States is encouraged by the

efforts currently under way by the Department of Political Affairs to strengthen AU conflict prevention and mitigation capacities. On humanitarian action, the United States appreciates the Secretary-General's recommendations on enhancing the AU's early warning systems through the development of a multi-risk early warning tool that includes socio-political, natural, human-made and economic vulnerabilities.

Such a system would have been particularly useful in places like Zimbabwe. The United States remains extremely concerned about the situation there. Despite significant pre-election irregularities, the people of Zimbabwe expressed their will during the 29 March elections. It has been 18 days since the elections and the results of the presidential race still have not been announced. However, based on publicly posted results, it is clear that the people of Zimbabwe voted overwhelmingly for change. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission needs to immediately release the presidential election results and ensure their veracity in a transparent manner.

We are gravely concerned about the escalating politically motivated violence perpetrated by security forces and ruling party militias that target opposition supporters in rural areas. The Government and its supporters must desist immediately from violence and intimidation, act with restraint, respect human rights and allow the electoral process to continue unfettered.

We commend the efforts of the Southern African Development Community to urge the Zimbabwean Government and electoral authorities to address the unfolding crisis. The time has come for the United Nations to support their efforts through a joint mission with the African Union to ensure that the electoral authorities act in conformity with the regional organization's principles for democratic elections, that the political violence ceases and that the will of the Zimbabwean people is upheld. In that regard, we welcome and support the Secretary-General's call today for international observers.

Finally, I would once again like to thank President Mbeki for his leadership in convening this important meeting. We understand and appreciate South Africa's interest in keeping the Security Council's attention focused on Africa and in developing a more effective working relationship between the Security Council and the African Union.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Mustafa Osman Ismail, Special Envoy and Adviser to the President of the Republic of the Sudan, to take the floor.

**Mr. Ismail** (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, on behalf of your brother President Omer Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, I have the pleasure to express our sincere gratitude for the kind invitation to participate in this important debate on the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union (AU), in the maintenance of international peace and security. I should like to inform the Council that an urgent domestic matter has prevented President Al-Bashir from taking part in this meeting. He has entrusted me to deliver the following message.

> "Allow me to express the appreciation of the Government and the people of the Sudan for the positive and historic initiative of South Africa and you yourself, President Thabo Mbeki, to hold this summit meeting. As members know, this is the fifth time that the Security Council has met at the summit level since the establishment of the United Nations, in 1945. With its long and unique experience and wise leadership, South Africa is the country most worthy of putting forward such an important initiative to promote concerted efforts to settle disputes and build peace on behalf of the international community. That heritage is a source of pride for Africa as it repeatedly leads the world's peace-loving States to international achievements, such as the elimination of apartheid in your country of South Africa.
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> "Following the many political, economic and social changes that have taken place on the continent, Africa is now strongly playing an important and historic role on the world stage. Those changes have included the establishment of the African Union and its various associated institutions, including the Pan-African Parliament, the Economic, Social and Cultural Council, the Peace and Security Council, the African Peer Review Mechanism and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, among others. This is unquestionably a reflection of Africa's determination to reform the United Nations, including the Security Council, in order to make it more transparent and effective, to

promote democracy in international relations and to respond to new facts and challenges on the ground that did not exist when the United Nations was established in the middle of the past century. The Sudan is determined to cooperate with the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping, whether in the framework of the Naivasha Agreement or under the Darfur Peace Agreement. That places us in a special position to talk about the item before the Council at today's meeting.

"Providing consistent, sustainable and predictable financing and, resources is the fundamental challenge facing the international community and today's Security Council summit meeting. We therefore express our full support for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's proposal to establish a joint African Union-United Nations panel to consider the resources necessary to support the African Union's peacekeeping operations, including funding, logistics and equipment on the ground. The panel should take up the possibility not only of direct financing through the United Nations scale of assessments, but also of establishing a specific fund to that end.

"In expressing our thanks to the Secretary-General for the importance he has attached to resolving African problems and for his relentless efforts to develop cooperation with the African Union, we would stress the need for priority always to be given to the peaceful — and, more specifically, the political — settlement of disputes. Peacekeeping requires that there be a peace to be kept. In that respect, we believe that support for regional peacemaking capabilities must be prioritized, because political settlements are the mother of all solutions to all conflicts.

"Effective cooperation with regional organizations, and the African Union more particularly, requires a reordering of support priorities and a building of capacities that take the following elements into account.

"First, preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention must be promoted and strengthened. As we know, those are very important elements that include political, development, humanitarian and social dimensions in which the role of the United Nations and the Security Council dovetails with those of regional and subregional organizations, the States concerned, non-governmental organizations and civil society actors.

"However, any observer of the Security Council's role in that regard will find that the Council's response in taking preventive measures to avert and mitigate the escalation of tensions is far more subdued than the speed with which it dispatches peacekeeping operations, although we know that preventing disputes requires far fewer resources than peacekeeping. We therefore believe that cooperation with the African Union requires, first and foremost, emphasis on preventive diplomacy and the strengthening of the appropriate African Union mechanisms, particularly the regional early warning system, the Panel of the Wise and the African standby force.

"We believe that understanding the true root causes of African disputes will speed the way to their settlement, particularly since the continent's conflicts are rooted in the lack of development, poverty, a shortage of resources, and such natural phenomenon as desertification, drought and numerous climate change phenomena that have sapped our development efforts. All such root causes give rise to internal crises.

"Secondly, as to the building of capacities in mediation and political settlement, we have always believed that the United Nations should take practical and concrete steps to exploit the respective capacities of regional organizations, particularly the AU, in mediation, negotiation and peacemaking through political settlements in order to begin resolving African problems in an African context and enabling regional organizations to achieve peace through financial, moral and political support from the United Nations, including the provision to the AU of all available information on peacemaking.

"Thirdly, with respect to support for regional peacekeeping capacities, I would stress above all the experience of the AU Mission in the Sudan. We believe this to be the ultimate example of the primacy of regional organizations in peacekeeping and their ability to achieve great things despite a lack of resources and capacities.

They fully understand and, indeed, live in close familiarity with the root causes of strife. They also fully understand the values, culture and heritage of local communities. Perhaps the founders of the United Nations, in drafting Chapter VIII of the Charter, grasped the importance of all those dimensions to the international and regional success of regional and subregional peacekeeping efforts. They are the best way to achieve international peace and security.

"The Sudan was therefore most eager to support the African mission, as reflected in the Abuja Agreement. Since July 2004, when it was first dispatched, primarily to monitor the implementation of the ,Ndjamena ceasefire agreement, the mission has experienced the situation on the ground and fully understands it.

"The only way to fully resolve a dispute is politically. It is now up to the Security Council and the AU Peace and Security Council to convince the rebels to heed reason and not the logic of guns. Effective and constructive negotiations are essential to a permanent and comprehensive settlement in Darfur.

"We wish to address the issue of impunity. Pressure should be brought to bear on the rebel groups living in the territories of our neighbours, and they should be convinced of the need for the option of peace. Amnesty ought not to be granted to those who take advantage of the situation in Darfur to smuggle children out of the country. We should heed the statement made by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the effect that the United Nations should not invest resources in a situation that it does not control. Let us avoid all double standards in international relations. The Sudan has honoured and continues to honour its commitments. Let others do the same.

"Once again, in expressing our appreciation for the wise leadership of South Africa in calling for the convening of this historic meeting, we also express the hope that its results will encourage our peoples' aspirations to stability, peace and security."

**The President**: I call on His Excellency Mr. Jorge Urbina, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica.

**Mr. Urbina** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to begin by thanking you, Sir, as well as Ambassador Kumalo and the delegation of South Africa, for organizing this debate. We welcome the presence among us of the Secretary-General and of high representatives of friendly countries. Today's debate is an ideal opportunity to exchange views on our shared responsibility.

International organizations are historical realities; as such, they are changeable instruments. Fortunately, they are better prepared today to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts than they were several decades ago. Unfortunately, however, we are also much more vulnerable to conflict than we were even just a few years ago. Natural and man-made disasters threaten the future of coming generations. There is no doubt that such phenomena as climate change, food crises, water shortages and the large-scale migrations they would entail augur poorly for the future with respect to conflicts. There is also no doubt that Governments' lack of legitimacy, historical resentments and conflicts over natural resources, together with illicit trafficking and terrorism, will fuel new and recurrent conflicts in the future. We in the developing world cannot stop warning that inequality on a global scale and the lack of attention to the extreme poverty that affects one fifth of humanity will also provide fertile ground for the roots of conflict to take hold.

However, we are better prepared than ever before. The international community has continued to advance in the development of new concepts and instruments to deal with conflicts and mitigate their destructive effects.

The concept of the responsibility to protect is a recent development that has turned what was once an absolute right of sovereignty into something much more complex: a right that encompasses the obligation of the State to protect populations on its territory and the subsidiary obligation of the international community to protect those populations when a State is unable to do so.

This contemporary system, which inextricably links the actions of States, international organizations and the international community, unavoidably imposes the concept of shared responsibility in the face of

conflict. And facing that shared responsibility, we should ask ourselves how we can work together to prevent conflicts and how we can work together to resolve them once they have begun.

From the perspective of the United Nations, Security Council resolution 1625 (2005) is a real road map by which to approach our responsibilities in conflict prevention, particularly in Africa. Furthermore, conflict prevention is the approach that should guide us and towards which we should direct our greatest efforts.

We will be less effective if we face conflicts and their manifestations and forget, as we often do, their root causes. In the words of the Secretary-General, "If we do not deal with the root causes of conflict — and offer sustainable solutions — we will be left with humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations without end" (*S/2008/18, para. 62*).

I would like to underline a fundamental concept in the Secretary-General's comment, when he speaks of the need to offer sustainable solutions. There may be no better moment than this to state that there can be no sustainable peace without sustainable development. Those two concepts are inseparable, and now that our Organization has matured to the point of not limiting its tasks to peacekeeping and of assuming its peacebuilding responsibility, we cannot set aside the sustainability of the solutions we help to build.

However, there will be no sustainable solutions without the legitimacy of Governments and institutions. We understand the concept of cultural diversity and we accept its consequences, but we know very well that where populations do not recognize their Governments as legitimate, there will be no sustainable peace. We also know that where there is no legitimate justice, there can be no sustainable peace either. We know, finally, that attempts to conceal or manipulate the will of the people do not provide a solid basis on which to build a sustainable peace.

For that reason, we are concerned by the current situation in Zimbabwe.

Another concept that Costa Rica would like to emphasize on this important occasion is the shared responsibility of the African Union and the United Nations to build peace on strong foundations of justice. Indeed, we underline the need to prevent conflict by implementing a justice that provides security for the population but that also puts an end to conflict by punishing those guilty of human rights violations and crimes against humanity. We will not be able to prevent or permanently resolve conflict while impunity exists; nor will we be able to build a sustainable peace on a foundation of impunity.

We said before that today we are better prepared to prevent and put an end to conflict. In this context, the contribution of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to the civilized world deserves special mention. We welcome the trust that many African States have placed in the Court, and we take this opportunity to call for respect for its authority, particularly in the Sudan, in connection with executing the arrest warrants that have been issued by the ICC.

This meeting should help both organizations to improve the basis of our cooperation. Africa occupies a good part of United Nations peace efforts, even though there are some situations in Africa to which the international community is not properly attending. Here I am referring in particular to Somalia.

In order to build more efficient cooperation towards the attainment of our purposes, it is fundamental to define responsibilities and mandates more clearly. We also need to give regional organizations the means necessary to properly fulfil their responsibilities. We must also strengthen communication between our respective Councils.

All of this seems particularly necessary in the light of the experience, new to all of us, of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the first of its kind. From UNAMID we will certainly learn many lessons towards improving our future cooperation.

Let me conclude by reiterating my country's firm commitment to strengthening the Organization's mechanisms for conflict prevention, which will undoubtedly benefit Africa and the entire developing world. I also reiterate my country's support for the political and military efforts that we undertake to resolve current conflicts and to resolve them in a way that is lasting and sustainable.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Alberto Arias, Permanent Representative of Panama, to take the floor.

**Mr. Arias** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to recognize the presence here today of

the Secretary-General and of our guests from the African region. Above all, I would like to congratulate you, President Mbeki, and my good friend Ambassador Kumalo for the interest that South Africa has shown in the search for mechanisms to strengthen and render more effective the role of regional organizations and their relationship with the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security. This is a good opportunity to recognize in general terms the valuable contribution that regional organizations have made in identifying and resolving the causes of armed conflict, as well as their fundamental importance in conflict prevention and resolution.

Panama reiterates its support for the continued collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union, as a mechanism for preventing and, if necessary, dealing with threats to peace and security in the region. Despite the successes achieved in these efforts, we would like to share our concern about, inter alia, the difficulties encountered in establishing the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and the international community's inability to provide the necessary resources to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

In the case of Somalia, the African Union has submitted a detailed report on what the forces on the ground require. We regret that, to date, the Security Council has not paid heed to this request. In this context, we must also mention Panama's deep concern about piracy off of the Somali coast, which hampers the vital transport of humanitarian supplies and threatens marine commerce in the Horn of Africa.

My delegation agrees with the recommendations of the Secretary-General to intensify the coordination between the African Union and the United Nations in conflict prevention and to strengthen the African Union's early warning system by, among other strategies, creating an appropriate multi-risk mechanism. Similarly, we need to extend collaboration to other aspects of great strategic importance. It is important, inter alia, to highlight the work undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the establishment of an African standby force that can respond to potentially explosive situations and deter belligerent groups from resorting to arms for resolving conflicts and thus putting civilian lives at risk. Clearly, that requires determination, readiness and capacity on the part of African States.

It is difficult to discuss conflict prevention in Africa without referring to the political crisis in Zimbabwe. Panama highlights the important efforts made by you, Mr. President, and by the South African Development Community in helping to resolve that crisis, respecting the democratic will of the citizens of Zimbabwe and ensuring a legitimate process. However, the actions of the current Government are disturbingly similar to those of autocratic regimes when they refuse to recognize the outcomes of elections and resist giving up power. Ignoring that situation could head us for another disruption in the peace and security in the region.

In addition to conflict prevention, cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations should seek to protect the civilian population, particularly the most vulnerable groups, such as women and children. That is why we commend the important collaboration among the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the African Union and subregional organizations to build a more effective normative framework for the protection of civilians in Africa. Such a framework should be based on the principles of promotion of and respect for human rights, which are the guiding principles of both OCHA and the AU.

Before concluding, I must point out that the current situation in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean is largely the result of close cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States in preventing and resolving conflicts. That cooperation is currently reflected in the progress that is being made in Haiti. Nonetheless, the existing regional mechanisms must be constantly evaluated and fine-tuned so that the collaboration between those mechanisms and the United Nations is as effective and efficient as possible.

Finally, Panama reaffirms its commitment to international legality, multilateralism and the principles governing relations between States. We are firmly convinced that it is only through dialogue, understanding and consultation that we can unite forces capable of developing new proposals to resolve the major imbalances and problems suffered by our peoples and regions. Panama reiterates that, if we are to expand the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, particularly the African Union, we must all become true partners in our plans

and, thus, repositories of mutual confidence and respect.

**The President**: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, to take the floor.

**Mr. Konaré** (Commission of the African Union) (*spoke in French*): I particularly thank you, Mr. President, for your country's leadership and your personal leadership on all African issues. Thank you for having convened this meeting and for dedicating your two presidencies to Africa, in March 2007 and now, by listening to African peoples and African leaders. The problem of financing was raised during our most recent summit and is not a new issue; it was already on the agenda in 1992, when we were establishing the crisis management mechanism.

I should like to attest to the great amount of time that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has devoted to Africa, and to the great interest that he has shown and the listening that he has done in order to be able to assist us. The Secretary-General has demonstrated that through the report that he has submitted to the United Nations and through his proposal that a committee of eminent persons be established so that we can move from discussion to practice. The Secretary-General will also permit me to commend his predecessor, Kofi Annan, who did his utmost for Africa. I should like to thank all our partners present here, from across the spectrum, without whose support the difficulties might have been greater.

You yourself, Mr. President, made an excellent plea to President Kikwete. I cannot add anything to it, because your voice is the most authoritative and legitimate, by virtue not only of your duties, but also of your experience. But I have taken the floor regarding the issue of financing, to say that it does not involve a policy on our part of holding out our hand. We are aware — because I speak on behalf of a responsible Africa — of the efforts that we ourselves must make and of the resources that we ourselves must mobilize. But we are asking this question to clearly indicate Africa's will to make its contribution to peace throughout the world. We are also asking this question to indicate that it is important to have confidence in Africa and in African men and women. We have achieved results in Côte d'Ivoire and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and we see what is being done in the Sudan and in Somalia. We must support the interested parties so that they can have more confidence in themselves and in each other, and must not act in their place.

Today, it is certain that resources must be swiftly mobilized to help us put out the fires in Somalia and in Darfur. Of course, there are political problems. Efforts are required from the parties. But we cannot sufficiently stress the fact that, in Somalia and in Darfur, significant resources have been lacking and that, if they had been there in time, we would have been able to do more in the political context.

It is important to build African capacities, because the responsibility is, first and foremost, our own. Building African capacities means consolidating the continental peace and security architecture, strengthening our planning capacities, helping us to swiftly build an early warning system and deploying standby forces. And I would go even further: the standby forces should be able to quickly deploy a standing rapid intervention force. Strengthening the continental peace and security architecture also means refusing to allow lawless zones to exist in Africa. It is not normal that the Somali coasts, despite the presence of significant military bases, are still under the control of pirates today.

I hope that the appeal by the President of Somalia will be heard. To strengthen the continental architecture is to strengthen African capacities. It also means reviewing our relations with all foreign military bases in Africa. I mentioned that last September.

I am pleased that the statement of the President of the French Republic offered perspectives that we should explore together. I am pleased that the authorities of the United States of America came to listen to us regarding the AFRICOM problem and hope that our concerns will be heard, because there is no other policy than to be in harmony with Africa in its will to assume its responsibility for defence and security.

Certainly we should embrace the recommendations of the Secretary-General and establish this panel. Certainly we need to speed up the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, but we must take care that we do not have a thousand restrictive clauses. In order to assist Côte d'Ivoire today, we need considerable means; to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we need considerable means. I am not saying to write a blank check. However, if there are a thousand

conditions delaying the implementation of programmes, the countries emerging from conflict or countries that have fragile democratization processes could suffer as a result. Public opinion needs to be informed of what is going to be done and what it has been agreed.

It is important for us to explore and make proper use of everything that Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations offers. Apparently, however, it is insufficient. President Gbagbo mentioned that. In fact, today we need to look at the entire philosophy and culture of the United Nations, which has done what it could. But today the nature of conflicts has changed. Today, nation-States that were the foundations of the United Nations are experiencing much upheaval. Today, beyond intergovernmental cooperation, there are countries that wish to proceed towards shared sovereignty — co-managed sovereignty. It is important that these organizations be able to integrate the United Nations architecture.

It is vital for our roles with the United Nations to be clearly defined. We are not talking about being present and giving to the United Nations and then stepping aside. We need to reflect on a system of co-management, in which, depending on the cases, the roles are defined. We cannot all be parallel; footbridges are needed. We need more coherence among the different representations of the United Nations and even of the United Nations system. It is important, and I wish to commend the Secretary-General, who acknowledged that the leadership of the AU is recognized and significant.

I have spoken at some length about this. I spoke with the Secretary-General yesterday about it; the Minister of Burkina Faso spoke about it; the Secretary of State of France mentioned it as well: the United Nations must act in the case of the current food crisis. The United Nations must act on the current financial crisis. This is a problem of human security. The President of the World Bank, the Executive Director of the International Monetary Fund and the Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization have made appeals to Governments, but what Government could affirm collective legitimacy more than the Secretary-General of the United Nations, more than the Security Council?

In relation with the Group of 8, in relation with all financial and economic institutions and in relation with regional organizations, we ourselves have launched an appeal to African regional organizations to quickly hold summit meetings, because this crisis is not cyclical, it is structural. It is not a matter of questions and answers for tomorrow. Even for countries that find answers for today, those would be only solitary solutions that could not last.

The four months to come, April to July, is the period of making ends meet in many countries. Prices will go up. If we are unlucky and the rainy season is not good, we could be looking at a most serious catastrophe. This morning we call on the Security Council. The Secretary-General must have all political means. Less than one month ago we held a high-level meeting to talk about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). But there will be no MDGs if we do not manage over this difficult period.

This is an urgent appeal requiring an urgent response. It cannot await the G8 summit in July. Legitimacy is in this House and must grapple with the problems of security, which include more than simply conflicts. Poverty and hunger kill as well. They will bring unexpected instability if we are not careful.

I would like assure the Secretary-General of the support of the new Chairman of the Commission, Jean Ping, of his determination to continue this work. He has been to this House; he knows it well. There is no doubt that he will be at the side of the Secretary-General in the name of Africa.

For my part, I can give you, Sir, the pledge that in my new functions, this commitment will be an ongoing one. These functions and responsibilities, new for me, are also my responsibilities as the former President of Mali and today as the former Chairman of the Commission of the African Union, because on 30 April at the latest the new President will take on those functions.

**The President**: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m.

*The meeting was suspended at 1.40 p.m.*